

This is testimony submitted on HB 5154 an **Act requiring the provision of information concerning children's mental health and domestic violence** by the coordinating committee of Social Welfare Action Alliance of CT, SWAA CT. to the Children's Committee

(The Ct SWAA chapter is a group of professional social workers, allies and community activists working in partnership with those communities who identify as being most negatively impacted by current societal inequities in efforts to educate, discuss and organize around correcting these inequities. We believe that "those closest to problem are closest to the solution but are furthest from the resources and power." We work to bring the opinion of those subject to those inequities in Ct to the source of power, in this case the Connecticut Legislators. Our stated priorities are: Advancing 1-racial, economic and social justice, 2- health care as a human right, 3-policing justice and prison transformation leading to abolition, 4-inclusive voter and election reform 5-tax equity and fairness.)

Testimony

SWAA CT is supportive of this legislation and supports the requirement that material on children's mental health resources and domestic violence resources be available to every police officer in the state to distribute as needed. Perhaps though, in light of **the 2020 Police Accountability and Transparency bill's** requirement that each police department in the state and the state police explore how they might work with and utilize social workers in or with their police departments, HB 5154 might require the police departments themselves to gather the needed referral information from local children's mental health and domestic violence agencies. SWAA CT suggests this might be a good way for the police to begin to exchange information and strengthen working relationships with social workers in local mental health and domestic violence programs. Finally, SWAA, CT would recommend that the statewide agencies identified in the bill for the police departments to go to obtain this referral information be the 211 services of the United Way for general social services referrals, DMHAS for children's mental health referral information and the CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) and their statewide hotline for domestic violence referrals and **NOT** the agencies listed in HB5154 currently. Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.